

## Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, August 4, 1793, Opinion on Convening Congress , from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

### OPINION ON CALLING OF CONGRESS J. MSS.

Aug. 4, 1793.

The President having pleased to propose, for consideration, the question, Whether it be proper to convene the legislature at an earlier period than that at which it is to meet by law? and at what time? I am of opinion it will be proper.

I. Because the protection of our southern frontier seems to render indispensable a war with the Creeks, which cannot be declared, nor provided for but by the legislature, nor prudently undertaken by the Executive, on account of the consequences it may involve with respect to Spain.

II. Because several legislative provisions are wanting to enable the government to steer steadily through the difficulties daily produced by the war of Europe, and to prevent our being involved in it by the incidents and perplexities to which it is constantly giving birth.

III. Because should we be involved in it, which is every day possible, however anxiously we endeavor to avoid it, the legislature meeting a month earlier will place them a month forwarder in their provisions for that state of things.

I think the first Monday in November would be a proper time for convening them, because while it would gain a month in making provisions to prevent or prepare for war, it leaves

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such a space of time for their assembling, as will avoid exciting alarm either at home or abroad.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sent to Washington with the accompanying letter.

“Sunday, Aug. 4, '93.

“Th. Jefferson presents his respects to the President and will pay due attention to his letter of this day. The question of convening the legislature was considered and as our opinions differed, we agreed to give them separately, which will be done tomorrow. We are to meet at 10 o'clock tomorrow to apply the rules, now approved by the President, to the several memorials & complaints as yet undecided, the result of which will be submitted to the President.”